



# Department of Justice

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**FEDERAL EMPLOYEE FAKES ILLNESS, STEALS COWORKERS' VACATION  
TIME, RECEIVES ONE YEAR IN PRISON**

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott announced today that United States District Court Judge Edward J. Garcia sentenced ROBERT JOSEPH THOM, 46, of Oceanside, Calif., this morning to one year in prison for 10 counts of wire fraud.

This case is the product of extensive combined investigation by the U.S. Department of Interior, Office of the Inspector General.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Michelle Rodriguez, who prosecuted this case, THOM presented false medical reports in order to be put on the federal government employees' nationwide annual leave list as a donor-recipient from December 14, 2006 to August 23, 2007. To get on the list, THOM falsely claimed he suffered malignant cancer, and he generated forged doctor's reports in order to receive donated vacation time from other federal government employees. As part of his wire fraud scheme, THOM fraudulently claimed he had undergone "multiple urgent surgeries" for brain tumors and he periodically submitted false medical reports concerning his so-called post-surgery recovery. THOM forged treating-physician reports that said that per doctor's order, he needed more time off work to "remain home" and "get plenty of rest." Based on THOM's nationwide plea for help in the form of donated annual leave, 30 Department of Interior employees, including at least 10 outside of California, donated over 982 hours of leave (with a value in excess of \$39,950) so that Thom could continue to

receive a federal government salary and benefits.

Since June 2004, THOM—who has two Associate Degrees, a Bachelor’s Degree in Computer Science, and a Master’s Degree in Business Administration—was employed at the Sacramento office of the U.S. Geological Survey, an executive branch agency under the U.S. Department of Interior, as an Information Technology Specialist. His duty station was in Southern California.

In addition to 12 months in prison, Judge Garcia also ordered THOM to pay full restitution and a special penalty assessment of \$1,000. Following his prison term, THOM will be on supervised release for 36 months.

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